

But the current contempt debate has lost its focus. This debate is no longer about gun-walking and Operation Fast and Furious. Having already discovered that Fast and Furious was the fourth in a series of gun-walking operations run by ATF's Phoenix field division in Arizona, dating back from the time of former President George W. Bush's administration, and finding no evidence of wrongdoing on the part of the Attorney General, the committee is now turning their focus to a single letter sent by the Department of Justice's Office of Legislative Affairs to Senator GRASSLEY on February 4, 2011, which initially denied allegations of gun-walking.

The Department has acknowledged that its letter was inaccurate and has formally withdrawn the letter. The Department has also turned over 1,300 pages of internal deliberative documents relating to how it was drafted, showing that staffers who drafted the letter relied on inaccurate assurances from ATF leaders and officials in Arizona who ran the operation. Again, the focus has shifted from the real matter of investigation and bringing justice to Agent Brian Terry's family.

During the 16-month investigation, the committee refused all Democratic requests for key witnesses and hearings, as well as requests to interview any Bush administration appointees. For example, the committee refused a public hearing with Ken Melson, the head of ATF, as well as a hearing or even a private meeting with former Attorney General Mukasey.

Attorney General Holder has worked in good faith, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, to respond to the committee's requests and even met with the bipartisan leaders from both Chambers last week, offering to provide additional documents regarding the Fast and Furious initiative. His offer was rejected, and even yet the committee has continue to move the goal posts by demanding additional internal deliberative documents from after the February 4 letter that is now in question.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is the concluding step of what has turned out to be, in my opinion, an unfair process of defaming a public servant who has thus far made all good-faith efforts to cooperate with the Oversight Committee.

Mr. Speaker, to suggest that today's debate and deliberations on this proposed contempt resolution against Attorney General Holder is a profound example of democracy at its best may also be considered a sad day—a sad day for our Nation and a recognition of the fact that there has been a failure of the system to function properly.

I would respectfully urge the Speaker not to bring this resolution to the floor and allow the leadership of both sides of the Oversight Committee not to give up, and continue the dialogue, continue the deliberation, and not to question the motives and integrity of our colleagues on the committee, but solve

the problem that is before us today, Mr. Speaker.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise to give a special tribute to those fathers and their families who have come to America as refugees, escaping the harsh political and economic conditions in their home countries. On June 20, we celebrated World Refugee Day. Like many of our forefathers, refugees came to America hoping for a better life. Refugees receive sanctuary in the United States because they are in harm's way, they cannot return home safely, and they have nowhere else to turn.

For generations, we have resettled millions of refugees from all over the world. They have come from many backgrounds and ethnicities. America has offered sanctuary to countless Jews, Eastern Europeans, and many others displaced during World War II. We have welcomed people from Cuba, Vietnam, and other Asian countries who were fleeing repressive regimes.

In my home State of Georgia, I have seen how refugees have become an asset, contributing to the local economy and to the local culture. According to data from the Matching Grant Program, on average, 85 percent of refugee families in Georgia are self-sufficient 180 days after arrival.

Many Americans know the remarkable story of the Lost Boys of Sudan. Thousands of Sudanese boys were displaced and separated from their families during the second Sudanese civil war between 1983 and 2005. They traveled by foot for weeks and sometimes years to refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya just to survive. Their resilience and hard work should be an example for us all.

Defying all odds, these young men pursued their dream of getting an education in America and grew to become productive members of my congressional district in Scottdale and Clarkston, Georgia. Nonprofit organizations such as Refugee Family Services and RRSIA, located in my district, provide refugees with the resources they need to become self-sufficient and adapt to life here in America.

Thanks to services provided by these organizations, Ram, a young man who grew up in a Nepali refugee camp, was awarded a prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship, a full 4-year scholarship to any college in the country. Ram chose to remain close to his family in Georgia, and he is attending Georgia Tech and plans to become a doctor.

So as we celebrate and recognize World Refugee Day this month, let us take a moment to think of those refugees, and let us recognize those organizations and volunteers working tirelessly every day helping refugees build

a better future for generations to come. Let us also be proud as Americans for following our age-old tradition of welcoming those who have lost almost everything, but have found in our great country a promise for a better tomorrow.

□ 1120

Moreover, let us celebrate the generosity of the American people who have granted to refugees the best gift of all—freedom and hope.

So I ask all of my colleagues not to cut funding for refugees just to score cheap political points. Let us instead embrace refugees. Except for Native Americans, we are all descendants of progenitors who came here under some form of duress. Let us uphold our better nature of compassion and kindness that lies at the heart of who we are as Americans.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 21 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As the energy and tensions of the Second Session gather, may there be peace among the Members of the people's House. Grant that all might be confident in the mission they have been given and buoyed by the spirit of our ancestors who built our Republic through many trials and contentious debates. May all strive with noble sincerity for the betterment of our Nation.

Many centuries ago, You blessed Abraham for his welcome to strangers by the oaks of Mamre. Bless this Chamber this day with the same spirit of hospitality, so that all Americans might know that in the people's House all voices are respected, even those with whom there is disagreement.

May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.